

exactly what the WEEE Act recognizes and seeks to capitalize on.

As Senator CARDIN, senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, noted when we introduced the bill: "Investment in women creates a positive cycle of change that can lift women, families, communities, and entire countries out of poverty, and this legislation will help us make inroads toward that important goal."

I would like to thank former Chairman Ed Royce and Congresswoman FRANKEL, as well as their staffs, for their leadership on this bill in the House.

I would also like to thank Senator CARDIN for joining me in sponsoring the bill here in the Senate, as well as our former colleague and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker, for his work to move this bill through the committee process.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by the White House, particularly from Presidential Advisor Ivanka Trump, who worked tirelessly to advocate for this bill, garner support from NGOs, and ultimately helped us see it across the finish line.

All of those who worked on this bill share an understanding that because women in some parts of the world are pushed so far to the margins that they are denied access to even the most basic financial services, much less business loans, leveling the playing field is the right thing to do. If we can achieve this goal, the world economy stands to grow significantly.

Now that the WEEE Act has become law, we have taken one significant step forward to realizing this laudable aim, and women in developing nations stand to benefit from USAID's upcoming efforts to help them find and secure their place in our global economy.

The Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act advances U.S. values and stimulates real, lasting economic opportunities around the globe for women. It will change lives and communities, promote equality, and help entrepreneurs and innovators thrive—all of which will benefit the global economy and the pursuit of prosperity.

Once again, I extend my thanks and gratitude to all who have worked so hard and helped this bill become law, and I look forward to following its implementation and results.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO BOB LEEPER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for more than 30 years, the men and women of Paducah, KY, have prospered with the leadership of my friend, Bob Leeper, in city, State, and finally county government. There are few individuals more appreciated for their public service in western Kentucky. At the end of last year, Bob completed his term as McCracken County judge-executive, and I would like to take a moment to offer my gratitude and reflect on his many years of service.

There is a common expression identifying two types of people who are elected to office: show horses and work horses. The first kind thrives when driving home a point in front of the camera or in making a bold headline. On the other hand, a work horse will forgo acclaim in favor of accomplishment and reject praise for progress. Without a doubt, Bob has spent his career as a work horse. His achievements will leave a lasting impact on the area and our Commonwealth.

To say the least, Bob cared little for party labels. As a matter of fact, during his distinguished career, Bob hit the political "trifecta" of sorts, having been elected by his constituents as a registered Democrat, then a Republican, and lastly as an Independent.

In his first elected office as Paducah city commissioner, Bob also served as mayor pro tem and quickly earned his colleagues' respect. From there, Bob won a seat in the Kentucky State Senate. In Frankfort, Bob set himself apart as a constructive leader and a problemsolver. His reputation for handling complex issues with fairness garnered the appreciation of his fellow senators on both sides of the aisle.

Reelected five times, Bob served for 24 years in Kentucky's legislature including as the chair of the senate appropriations and revenue committee. His work from this important post displayed his integrity, skill, and his characteristic nature as a work horse.

Bob chose to leave the Senate in 2014, but that didn't end his career of public service. The same year, he was elected as the McCracken County judge-executive, the top job in county government. In that role, Bob had the opportunity to continue serving his community and making positive impacts on the lives of his neighbors. Among his proudest accomplishments, he includes a number of infrastructure improvements at the courthouse, jail, road department, and in the local parks. I enjoyed partnering with him on behalf of workers at Paducah's U.S. Department of Energy site.

For his decades of service in Kentucky, the current members of the Paducah City Commission wanted to express their gratitude to Bob at his retirement with a lasting testament to his work. The commission unanimously voted to name a footbridge in his honor in Paducah. When completed, the Bob Leeper Bridge will connect the city and county's trail systems, a fit-

ting tribute to a man who spent his career working to benefit his community.

As he enters his retirement from public service, Bob plans to return to his first calling: treating patients at his chiropractic clinic. He also will spend more time volunteering, playing tennis, and relaxing with his beloved wife Gina. It is my privilege to join so many in McCracken County to thank Bob for his three decades of committed vision and leadership. I ask my Senate colleagues to help me congratulate Judge-Executive Bob Leeper on this milestone and to extend best wishes in his retirement.

Mr. President, the Paducah Sun recently published an editorial expressing appreciation to Bob. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Paducah Sun, Jan. 17, 2019]

SINCERE APPRECIATION: WORDS OF THANKS FOR LONGTIME ELECTED LEADER BOB LEEPER

(By the Editorial Board)

The inspirational quote was painted on Bob Leeper's office wall at the McCracken County Courthouse in 2015, shortly after he took over as county judge-executive.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate," the quote from author Marianne Williamson reads. "Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure."

The motivational words stayed on that wall all four years, serving as daily affirmation.

"It's a reminder that we all have purpose and sometimes it's bigger than we even realized and we kind of have to accept that place that we are in life, and sometimes it's important you take a stand," Leeper said.

A case could be made Leeper's life purpose, or at least one of them, was serving his native Paducah and McCracken County, which he did in his quiet, transparent and dignified way for more than half his life across three offices.

Leeper, 60, served 31 years total—three as a Paducah city commissioner, 24 as a state senator, and a sole four-year term as judge executive.

He did not run for reelection, and turned over the county's top leadership post to current judge-exec Craig Clymer earlier this month.

Leeper, a chiropractor by trade, is now enjoying his "political retirement," spending his time treating patients at his clinic, volunteering in the community, and enjoying one of his favorite hobbies—playing tennis.

He doubts very seriously his name will ever appear on another ballot, which is sure to be a healthy change for him but an unfortunate one for the local community.

"Today, I'd say no, I don't think that's going to happen," he said of someday running again for office. "I learned from four years ago that you never say absolutely no, but I don't have any vision of anything right now."

Now is the time for us, and we hope area residents, to thank Leeper for all his hard work on the public's behalf at the local and state levels. He served us honestly and admirably, often eschewing publicity or attention, and with his constituents' best interests in mind.

Frankly, leaders who put their communities first are rare these days, and Leeper's presence and influence will be greatly missed.